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1910

The
LORELEI
and OTHER POEMS
with PROSE SETTINGS



**HENRY
BROWNFIELD
SCOTT**



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AND
OTHER POEMS
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THE LORELEI

THE LORELEI

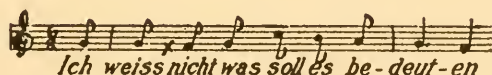
AND

OTHER POEMS

With Prose Settings

BY

HENRY BROWNFIELD SCOTT



ILLUSTRATIONS BY

SAMUEL A. MARTIN

THE WERNER COMPANY

Akron, O., and Pittsburgh, Pa.

1910.

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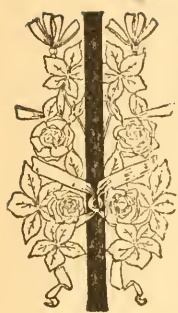
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DEDICATION.

TO ERASMUS WILSON.

Helpin' fellers all he kin—
'T 's the way 't 's al'a's been,
Since I 've knowed the good ol' 'Ras
Wilson: Never tries t' pass,
Cold 'n' glum, 's some folks do,
Anybody in a stew
'Bout a pester'n' thing; but, right
There 'n' then, 'ith all his might,
Helps t' clear away the cloud.
Giminenters! ain't I proud
'At I know him, 'n' 'at he
Likes t' help a feller?—Gee!
Well, fer *that*, 'n' 'cause he 's took
Pains t' help me 'ith this book—
Though the honor may be slim—
It I dedicate t' him.

INTRODUCTION.



IN LAUNCHING this volume on the Ocean of Literature, so to speak, I offer no excuse; but I wish to tell how I came to do so. Ever since I can remember, poetry has had a charm for me; and, as the years go by, my love of it grows stronger. When I was not more than three years old, my mother taught me a stanza of a poem she found in a church paper, called, I believe, "The Millennial Harbinger." The stanza ran:

"The glorious sun that rolls on high,
The moon that lights the midnight sky,
And every twinkling star we see
Tell we owe our lives to Thee."

Young as I was, the depth, and the sweep, and the rhythmic beauty of those four lines made a wonderful impression on me. We lived in the country where there were plenty of trees and flowers, and, consequently, many birds and insects. These appealed to me as keenly as the sun, moon and stars. At first my child brain was sorely puzzled over the first three words of the last line. I thought "tell we owe" was one word; and, while squinting my eyes that I might look at the sun, or watching the moon and the stars at night, I wondered what "tellweowe" could mean.

Perhaps that is the reason, being naturally of an inquisitive turn, I pondered so much over the stanza; also why I so

early formed a love for metrical selections, and a desire for creating them. Who can tell? For many years—more at least than I care to reckon—I have had to hustle to keep my head above water. Nevertheless, I have found time to indulge myself the pleasure of putting into verse some of the thoughts and—yes, feelings, for to thoroughly enjoy thinking one must feel correspondingly—that have come to me. To say that no ulterior motive of publication prompted me to put my thoughts into measured lines, would be untrue. But many of the poems presented in this collection were written purely for my own enjoyment. And, in order to help the reader understand better what I have written, I shall tell how and why I wrote. This is not conventional; but—bother conventionalities!—when one wants to be understood.

I have read, it may be, ten or a dozen translations of Heinrich Heine's beautiful German legend, "Die Lorelei," none of which seems to me to have the true ring. This may be egotism; but, whatever it is, I have it. Therefore, I determined to make a translation of the poem myself; and, having done so, showed it to a number of German scholars. They were so pleased with my translation that I decided to publish it for distribution among my friends. Then I found a lot of other matter I had written, off and on, as the years ran along, and, finding it not bad "copy," concluded to issue this volume. I am sort o' pleased with the collection, too, and my pleasure will be complete if the public receives it in the same spirit with which it is offered.

THE AUTHOR.

PITTSBURGH, PA., 1910.

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THE LORELEI.

THE LORELEI.

(Translated from Heinrich Heine's German poem, "Die Lorelei.")

I know not the cause of my sorrow,
 Why gloom fills my eyes with tears ;
A legend, in mem'ry, I borrow
 Out of the by-gone years.
The air is cool, the light waneth,
 And peacefully flows the Rhine ;
The loftiest hill-tops retaineth
 The evening's red sunshine.

On the heights sits a lovely maiden—
 A virgin, wondrously fair ;
In bright gems and jewels beladen,
 She combeth her golden hair.
She combs it with comb that is golden,
 And singeth a melody
So direful, yet sweet, and so olden
 The waves list in ecstasy.

The boatman, his tiny barque drifting
 The foam-hidden rocks among,
In terror, his dazed eyes uplifting,
 Heeds naught save that magic song.
I believe the boat and the master
 The waves swallowed up at last ;
And Lorelei wrought the disaster
 By the spell around her cast.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.



HERE is no song more lastingly and universally beloved by the Germans than "The Lorelei." Even in this country, scarcely a festive occasion of theirs passes without its being sung, all joining in with a zest that has thrilled me with an enthusiasm akin to their own, every time I have heard them render it. Yet there is a greater charm to me in the way Heinrich Heine, the great German writer, tells the story of the legend, than in the mere song itself.

While nearly everybody knows or has heard the song, there are comparatively few, so far as my experience goes, who know the legends concerning this siren. One of the most ancient, and that on which Heine based his poem, follows:

Long years ago a wondrously beautiful maiden, a water nymph, thought to be an immortal, and one of the daughters of old Father Rhine, was believed to dwell, by day, in her coral-cave palace in the cool depths of the river, near St. Goar, and to sit on a gigantic rock close at hand in the evening singing such entrancing music that passing boatmen, whose ears caught the notes of her song, forgot time and place, and allowed their boats to be dashed to pieces on the sharp, jagged rocks in the salmon-basin whirlpool below, where they perished.

Tradition accounts for but one mortal who made friends with the Lorelei. She, the legend tells, one evening saw a handsome young fisherman from Oberwesel bathing in the Rhine near her rock, and fell in love with him. Her love was

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

ardently returned; and the youth, for weeks, met her at the riverside every night, spending delightful hours with her, drinking in her beauty and the spell of her enchanting music. Always, when they parted, she pointed out to him where to cast his nets on the morrow; and, by implicitly following her instructions, he never went home with an empty creel. Jealousy, however, finally wrought the young fisherman's destruction. The Lorelei, knowing the youth was loved by a pretty maiden of Oberwesel, in jealous frenzy, one night dragged him down to her coral palace that she might enjoy his companionship forever alone.

But the siren is reported to have continued her nightly enchantments on her rock; and Count Ludwig, the only son of Prince Palatine, one evening drifted down the Rhine with the firm hope of catching sight of her. Darker grew the light and waters as the bed of the Rhine narrowed; but the count gave that no heed. Finally his eyes, which had long been fixed on the highest point of rocks, caught a glimpse of white drapery and golden hair, and his ears faint, sweet notes of the siren's direful, yet alluring song. The strains of the melody became more distinct, as the count drew nearer, and her marvelous beauty more clearly portrayed as she bent over the edge of the rock and beckoned him to her. Spell-bound, the count and his boatmen paid no heed to their vessel, and it crashed into the rocks and sunk with all on board, only one man escaping to tell of the cruel fate of the young count.

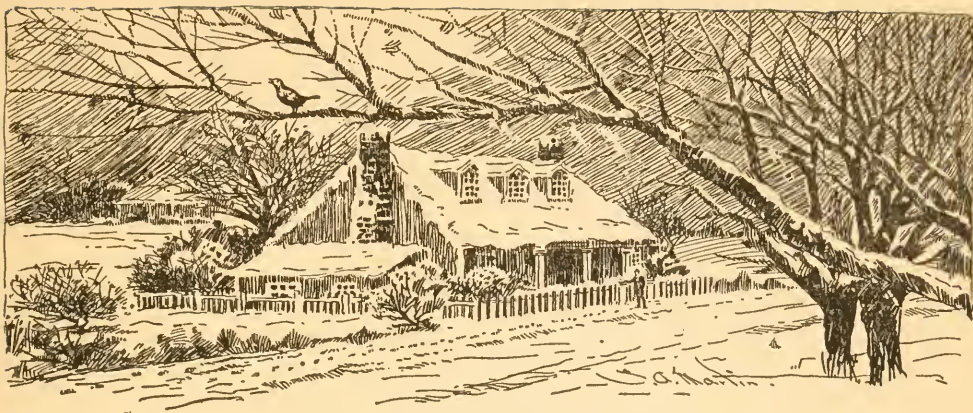
Frantic with grief and thirsting for revenge, the count's

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

father immediately issued orders for the siren's capture. A picked band of warriors eventually surrounded her on her rock, and bade her surrender. But, unannoyed, she continued crooning her song and combing her golden hair; then gracefully waved her lovely arms, which act rooted the grim old warriors to their tracks, and rendered them incapable of uttering a sound. Calmly taking off her jewels, the Lorelei dropped them one by one over the edge of the cliff into the Rhine; then whirled about in a mystic dance, muttering some weird chant, until the waters of the Rhine rose to her feet, and a chariot, drawn by white-maned steeds, was swept to her on a great, foam-crested wave. Springing into the car, the siren vanished over the cliff, into the river, which fell to its normal stage with the disappearance of the magical equipage. Since then the Lorelei has never been seen on the cliff, although boatmen and others, chancing to be in that neighborhood late at night, claim they have caught faint echoes of her sweet, bewitching song.

It is impossible, of course, to translate into English rhyme the exact wording of Heine's immortal composition; but I believe I have kept more closely to his versification of "The Lorelei" than any other translator. His verse has a smoothness and a depth of feeling to it which seem to be lacking in the translations I have read, and which I have tried to preserve.

TO A BRAVE SONGSTER.



“The Earth Lies Stark and Drear.”

TO A BRAVE SONGSTER.

Mantled in shroud of driven snow
The earth lies stark and drear;
Yet brave and sweet you sing as though
Summer and sun were here.

Slowly the dawn creeps from her bed,
Ghostly and chill and lone;
But your clear matin swift is sped
As lance by warrior thrown.

Over the pulseless field and fen
The cheery melody
Ripples and wells to hill and glen,
Echoing glad reply.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Into the frozen sky you fling
A laugh to Fate's decree—
A tang of ardent Youth and Spring,
And fairest imagery.

Hail, little songster! I have been
Fearful of Life's alarms;
But you have taught me true, I ween,
To sing in time of storms.



WHY do birds sing, children laugh, frogs croak, katy-dids chant, donkeys bray? The answer is told in one word—Nature. But for a bird to sing sweetly and cheerily when the earth is covered with more than a foot of snow, and the thermometer near zero, strikes me as something heroic. Early one March morning I was the witness of just such brave heroism, which resulted in my composing “To a Brave Songster.”

As a morning newspaper man, I had done begrudgingly, a turn of “late watch,” that bane to most newspaper fellows' existence; and was on my way home. The month of February and the early part of March had been unusually mild; but during the night in question, it turned very cold, and snowed hard for eight or ten hours. It was one of those powdered-sugar kind of snows, and drifts were plentiful everywhere. I live a considerable distance from the car-line; and, having had to wade through unbroken oceans of that freezing snow, it seemed to me, ere I reached my yard-gate, I was about as blue

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

as possible when I arrived there. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when a bird, perched on the topmost limb of a tall tree in front of my door, burst into one of the cheeriest, sweetest bird-songs I have ever heard.

Knee-deep in the snow and numb with cold, I stood there, stock still, listening to that bird's melodious matin. The warm weather must have lured him North before his usual migration period. However that may be, he was there, and singing away as merrily as though it were June. It was just breaking day, the wind had gone down to a calm, and his voice poured out clear, with a ring to it that echoed far and wide. He sang two or three minutes; then flew away, taking a Southerly direction, probably on his way to a warm latitude, there to remain until Spring got back in earnest. I am not well enough versed in bird lore to say what his class is ornithologically, probably of the thrush genus; but at any rate he was a dandy singer.

Well, the little rascal's daring cheeriness made me feel ashamed of the grouch I was carrying; and before I went to bed that morning, I wrote the accompanying ode—or whatever it may be—to him, both as a relief to the feelings the song had inspired, and a tribute to the courage of the songster.

DUST OF YEARS.



“Blind to The Fates I Kneel . . .”

DUST OF YEARS.

Deep in a mystic wood
I have digged me a grave
Mid rarest solitude
That man may crave.

Mine is the grief to bear,
And mine the miser's greed—
Spurning the thought to share,
The eye to read.

Softly the twilight falls.
A subtile minstrelsy
Wakes in my heart and calls:
“Death cannot free!”

So, to my grave I steal,
Martyr to Dust of Years;
Blind to the Fates I kneel,
Nor chide my tears.



PSYCHIC matters have never been of more than passing interest to me except as regards their relation to telepathy and mesmerism. The art of mesmerism, or animal magnetism, is applied, to a greater or less degree, daily in every walk of life. Telepathy, however, while perhaps a more powerful agent than magnetism, because it may be transmitted across oceans and continents, is only occasionally recognized and understood.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

I believe telepathy was responsible for my writing the lines entitled, "Dust of Years." Here are the circumstances; and the reader may draw his or her own conclusion:

Back in 1893, a young man of delicate constitution, but of brilliant mind, and I roomed together. We were both engaged on morning newspaper work, and usually went home about the same time. Our room was a double affair, his bed standing in a sort of alcove; but he would sit with me at my fire—its being Winter and a cold one, too—often until after daybreak, while we talked and smoked. He had traveled much and was exceedingly well read, and it was a rare treat to listen to him.

Although of dark, sallow complexion, he was a good-looking fellow. His eyes were black and brilliant, his hair and mustache, dark, thick and glossy, with sprinkles of gray; his hands and feet, small and shapely. He had a low, musical voice, and his manner was always pleasant. I did not learn his age, but I would say it was about twenty-seven; and I think he was a married man. Somehow we never discussed our ages nor family affairs.

After we had roomed together about three months, I got home about two o'clock one morning, and found him packing his trunk. Having completed the task, he came and sat by my fire as usual.

"I am going to San Francisco," said he, in answer to my inquiries. "I have a good offer on the *Chronicle* there, and will leave for the Coast to-day."

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

I was truly sorry to have him leave, and told him so. He thanked me in his modest, easy way, and sat gazing silently at the fire for a long time. Finally he turned to me and said:

“Do you know that for a man who has as wide acquaintance as I, I have fewer real, close friends than any other man living? And the uncanny part of the matter, it may be to you, is that I am satisfied with such state of affairs. I’ll tell you why: In the first place, I am a confirmed fatalist. And, secondly, I am what the world calls a pessimist. In reality, though, I am an optimist. I am absolutely satisfied with what this life has given me, although there may not be another person in a million who would be.”

Being accustomed to let him talk without interruption, I made no comment; and he went on:

“You have never asked me anything about my personal affairs, and I have volunteered no information along those lines. I am glad you have not, for I wouldn’t have told you; and that might have caused us to part bad friends. There has been nothing in my life that I need be ashamed of, except I have not been of any use, to speak of, to the world in general. I have been nothing but a rover and a dreamer. I do newspaper work simply to earn money to live on. I have ambition neither for fame nor riches. All I care for is enough to meet my expenses comfortably. I don’t like the beastly climate of Pittsburgh, and I’m going to sunny California for the rest of my days, which I am sure will not be of any great length.”

“I hope you have no organic ailment——” I began, when he waived the question aside impatiently.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

“ Nothing to speak of,” he said; “ but people of my temperament have not long lives. Besides, my people are not noted for extreme longevity. But what I have been trying to tell you—and I don’t know why I want to tell you either—is,” and he turned and looked at me fixedly, his eyes soft and dreamy: “ I have a sorrow that is all my own. It is to me a sweet, unsharable sorrow; one which I love to steal away to as a mother loves to steal to the grave of her dead child. Perhaps you cannot understand—but my grief has the effect on my heart of a sweet, sad chord of music. My sorrow is a sort of Dust of Years’ consequence; and I, like a martyr, blindly kneel to the Fates; nor do I chide what few real tears I let fall.”

My friend left that morning while I was asleep in bed, and I never saw him again. Nor did I have any letter from, nor word concerning him, until I believe he sent me a telepathic message about a year after he left Pittsburgh. I had changed my rooming-place to a house about a mile from where he and I had been located, and was sitting before the fire at three o’clock one morning. Suddenly, I thought of him and what he had said to me the morning he left for San Francisco. Possibly his precise words were repeated in my brain; and I could see him in my mind’s eye, and hear his voice in my mind’s ear—the mind has ears as well as eyes, has it not?—as plainly as though he had been sitting there beside me.

It was then I wrote the poem, “ Dust of Years.” Next day I read in the papers that my friend had committed suicide in a San Francisco hotel, on the very morning and at the time—longitude considered—that I seemed to hear and see him in my room.

PETE, THE VOLUNTEER.



"Hush! Hark! What Means That Awful Rending Boom?"

PETE, THE VOLUNTEER.

Tall as the steeple of a church it stood
A great square structure wrought of brick and wood.
Workmen had hurried with heroic zeal
Day after day to meet the stern appeal
The foreman made: "We must complete on time
This job, no matter how the mortar-lime
May set. . . . For quick result is all we ask,"
He said; and each bent firmly to his task.

Thus had a dozen stories quickly grown
Into a many-windowed shaft—alone,
Grim and colossal, with proud head and high
Above its neighbors nestling lowly nigh. . . .
The time was Winter; and a raging blast
The Storm King down upon that building cast,
While scores of hardy toilers calmly ate
Their noon-day meals, all unaware that Fate,

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

With swift, relentless mien, had sealed their doom.
Hark! Hush! What means that awful rending boom?
What monstrous force is twisting walls and beams
Of that great structure? . . . Hear the screams
Of agony amid the horrid crash
Of falling débris, and the winds that lash
And shriek like fiends! . . . From top to corner-stone,
Alas! there lies the building wrecked and prone! . . .

Hour after hour and far into the night
Men stout of heart—accustomed to the sight
Of tortured living and of mangled dead—
Heave stone and brick until that wreckage dread
Has yielded nigh to fifty ghastly corse. . . .
“Who’ll volunteer,” above the tumult roars
A trumpet voice, “to risk his life to save
That of a child? Is there one here so brave?”

Crushed in a cellar doorway ’neath a plank,
Alive, but almost choked with dust and rank,
Abhorrent odors, helpless lies a boy,
Blue-eyed and fair—a mother’s princely joy.
Though racked with pain and cold, the child gives cheer
To those who fain would rescue him. . . . But near—
Aye, all too near above him!—looms a tall,
Huge mass of beetling and unstable wall.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

And weighted by that mass, the beam which felled
The boy—and like a vise of steel has held
Him there, so wedged beyond relief that men
Half crazed with grief and pity long have been—
Must be removed, ere to his mother's breast,
In frantic bliss, her offspring may be pressed. . . .
“ Who'll take this saw and cut that plank in twain? ”
Rings loud and far that trumpet voice again.

But all stand dumb ; for swift and frightful death
It seems to do the deed. A touch, a breath
Might cause the avalanche of brick to crash
Precipitately on the one so rash.
A silence, painful, strained and full of gloom,
Falls o'er the scene. . . . “ Must that hole be the tomb
Of this poor boy? *For shame!* ” the trumpet wails,
While hearts respond ; but fear each bosom quails.

Moments are fleeting, and the calls below
Have dwindled to but whispers weak and slow ;
And sobs of rough men join that mother's wild,
Imploring cry that she may save her child.
Hands kind though firm are holding her away,
And gentle Sisters plead with her to pray. . . .
“ For there is naught else now that we can do—
God's will be done ; His grace be unto you! ”

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Ha! From the crowd—all weary, sore and soiled,
For with the rescue gangs he long has toiled—
Comes a lone fireman. (Pete, a “Sub,” is he,
Known round the engine-houses as a free,
Good-natured wight, with scarce a thought so grand
An act as this would fall unto his hand.)
“Give me that saw,” he said, and at him gazed
The man who held it—for all thought him crazed

Who thus would banter Death—“*the boy I’ll save
Or perish with him!*” . . . Hear the people rave,
Half mad with joy! Breathless and tense they hung
While calmly wrought this man, though o’er him hung
That direful mass of peril. Now they see
The child is safe. . . . Ah! can there ever be
Enough of glory—has this world renown
Sufficient to such worthy heroes crown?



HERO worship is not a strong characteristic of mine.
It never was, even as a boy. It appears to me
that most so-called heroes, while they have un-
doubtedly accomplished valliant deeds, have been
inspired mainly by a thirst for vaingloriousness.
That, however, has not kept me from being an ardent admirer
of brave acts, for love of approbation is a mighty good asset in
one’s make-up, if held in reasonable bounds.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

In looking over some old newspaper clippings the other day, I ran across some describing the horrible Willey—or Weldin—building disaster, of January, 1889, in which nearly fifty lives were lost. One of the clippings tells of the rescue of a small boy by Peter Snyder, a Sub-Fireman, at the perilous risk of his own life. I was an eye-witness to that daring rescue, and a few days after the event, started to write the poem, "Pete, the Volunteer"; but, having taken sick at that time, and in consequence compelled to lie very ill of typhoid fever in a hospital for seven weeks, the completion of the composition has been put off until now.

The disaster was one of the worst in the history of Pittsburgh. I was "subbing" on the old *Pittsburgh Times*, but that afternoon and until nearly daylight the next morning, made considerably more than a "full hand," you may be assured. I was rooming on the South Side, and, chancing to go over early that afternoon, was crossing the Smithfield Street Bridge, in a street car, when the storm struck the Willey—or Weldin—building (it was called both), and literally twisted it to pieces. The structure was about twelve stories in height, and had been run up so hurriedly that the mortar in the brick walls had not time to properly set, so that the storm—a sort of young cyclone—swooped and swirled into the top of the building, which was open, twisting it with the apparent ease a child might a toy, completely wrecking the great structure from top to bottom, piling it into a ragged mass at the base, and crushing the low buildings clustered about as though they were egg shells. More than sixty workmen were in the big building, quietly eating

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

their dinners on the several floors, when the appalling catastrophe occurred; and with scarcely a moment's warning, scores of lives were destroyed as would an avalanche a party of mountain climbers in the Alps.

It was my first "big" assignment, and was, I can tell you, plenty big enough to satisfy even my then morbid desire for assignments that had "hair curlers" in them. Charley Dawson, now long dead, was Acting City Editor of *The Times*. He saw me getting off the car and hurried me down to the scene of the disaster. Its being nearly an hour before the regular time for the reporters to show up for afternoon assignments, I was the first of *The Times* force to reach the place of the accident. The police had already established a guard-line, and, having no press-badge, I had considerable difficulty in getting through; but a policeman who knew me finally let me pass, grumbling the while about reporters' carelessness in losing their badges.

Perhaps I was supersensitive—am still, for that matter—but, at any rate, I felt much of the extreme horror of that catastrophe before I even had caught a glimpse of its dire results. It made me feel sick and weak-kneed for a bit; but I soon pulled myself together, and by the time I had pushed my way through the dense crowds, and was safely through the guard-line, I was ready for anything.

Then I pitched in to find out all possible about the disaster—what caused it, how many and who were injured, and every wherefore the story might develop. And a strenuous time of it I had, too, until after five o'clock the next morning.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Every hour or so I reported to Dawson, personally, in the office. What I had picked up, but which belonged to another man's part of our gigantic account printed in *The Times* the next morning, was turned over to that writer; what I had special, and which was considerable for a "Cub," I wrote myself.

Well, sometime during the night, just as I got back from a trip to the office, I heard a man, probably a Fire-Chief, shout through a trumpet:

"Who'll voluntcer to risk his life to save a child? Is there anyone here brave enough to do that?"

This, naturally, set me a-quiver with reportorial zeal; and instantly I was all eyes and ears. Here would be a peach of a feature story, I thought. But my enthusiasm was short-lived. Just then George Welshones, *The Times'* star man, tapped me on the shoulder.

"Let me take this, Scotty," he said; "I want to feature it specially."

Tired and hungry—for I had had little to eat that day—as I was, it hurt keenly to let another have that story. But I knew "St. George" (Welshones' pen-name) could do the story far better justice than I, and, with a sigh, said: "All right, Mr. Welshones."

But I witnessed that rescue, all the same. And it was dramatic in the extreme. The weather had grown very cold; lights in the hands of rescuers bobbed here and there among the wreckage strewn in all directions of the compass, while near a hole on the Wood street side, stood a group of men and a

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

few women, gazing alternately into the hole and at a tall chimney-like column of wall left standing a dozen or so feet to the North, and which seemed ready to fall directly into that hole at any moment. Six or eight feet down this excavation which the rescuers had made, lay a little blue-eyed, fair-haired boy, about twelve years old. He had stepped into the first floor of the building, presumably to look around, just as the destroying blast came, and been crushed through the floor into a doorway of the cellar. A heavy plank or beam of wood lay across the boy so wedging him down that he could not be got out until this obstacle was removed; and, as it was held firmly in place by the threatening portion of wall, there was only one way to get the child out—saw the plank. But who would perform that death-facing task? That rocking pillar of destruction made the bravest quail. Only the boy's broken-hearted little mother had volunteered; but a quartette of Sisters of Mercy held her back, knowing she could not saw that thick, hard board in two; and pleaded with her to pray.

The child had been fed warm milk and bouillon through a long tin tube reached down to him; and up to within a short time, had cheerily encouraged his mother and the rescuers, telling them he could hold out all right. But his voice had dwindled to whispers so soft and slow that it could scarcely be distinguished, and the fear was that he was dying.

“*Must the child die in that foul hole?*” rang out that trumpet voice once more. “*Will no one cut that plank?* SHAME! SHAME!”

But not a man stirred a step toward the saw held by a big

fireman. Not a voice was heard except that of the poor mother's pleading to be allowed to go to her boy. Rough men around me were sobbing, and my teeth had a tight grip on my under-lip to keep me from joining with them. The situation was an exceedingly pained, not to say a strained one, for what appeared to be several minutes, when Peter Snyder, a young "Sub" on the fire department of the city, a good-natured, care-free chap, whom everybody called "Pete," went up to the man holding the saw.

"*Gi'me that,*" he said, gruffly; "*I'll git that kid out'n there 'r perish with him!*"

Not another word was spoken; but all looked at Pete in amazement. We all thought he would surely be killed, and held our breath as he calmly sawed away at that thick, hard plank, expecting at every stroke of the saw to see the huge mass of brick that hung tottering above him fall and crush him to death. But at last the sharp teeth of the saw had eaten through that beam, and the boy was free!

Never shall I forget the shouts of joy that leaped from the throats of the throng as Pete lifted the almost lifeless child out of the hole which we all thought must be the place of his death. I can hear them ringing yet. I never shout nor make demonstrations on occasions like that. I simply can't do it! It is a physical impossibility. I hurried away to the office, wiping genuine tears from my eyes. What I had witnessed was well worth those tears—aye, and oceans more!

Welshones' story of that rescue is a classic. But I have lost the copy of it I had saved, and, so far, have been unable to

find another. Poor St. George! None could better touch the heart through the pen than he!

“Pete, the Volunteer,” still lives. The City Councils honored him with a gold medal of merit, and to-day he is one of the City of Pittsburgh’s fire department chiefs, with headquarters at Twenty-four engine house, Wilmot Street, loved and respected by the whole city. The boy? I do not know what became of him. I know Peter Snyder saved him from that yawning pit. That is enough for this tale.



HO, DAR! YOU 'RASTUS JOHNSING!

HO, DAR! YOU 'RASTUS JOHNSING!

Ho, dar! you 'Rastus Johnsing!

Don' hol' yo' haid s' high!

'Cause you's bin 'lected Bishop,

Dar haint no reason why

Yo' eyes mus' be

Etu'nally

Fixed on de hebenly sky!

I's proud you's got de la'nin'—

You studied long an' well;

An' dar's none lubs you bettah,

Ner none moah glad ter tell

How sma't you is

In 'Rithmatiz;

An' how you read an' spell.

You know de Bible perfec';

You sing an' preach an' pray

Much loudah dan de pa'son

I hea'd las' Sabbath day;

But, honey, kin

You entah in

De Gol'n Gates dat way?

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

De people crowd eroun' you,
All eagah fer yo' smile,
An' bow an' scrape an' flattah,
Yo' favohs to beguile;
But once you fall,
Den one an' all
Would run f'um you er mile.

So, take yo' pore ol' Anty's
Advice, fer once, an' be
Yo'se'f widout no trimmin's;
Yo' way den you will see
Bof true an' cleah;
An' you will heah
No moah complaints f'um me!



OF ALL the army of big-feeling mortals the good Lord allows to walk His footstool, the newly-elected negro Bishop leads the van. It is a wonder some of his ilk do not burst, so swelled with importance are they.

About fifteen years ago, among my assignments as a news-gatherer, one afternoon, was an annual meeting of the Pittsburgh Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Securing enough data for a "stick or so" of matter, I left the meeting and came down street to take a car to cover another

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

assignment. It was fully ten minutes before the car came along, and, the weather being pretty cold, I tramped back and forth to keep my blood circulating freely. Standing in a doorway, so bundled up that only her eyes and nose were exposed, was an old negress. As I passed, she muttered to herself:

“Ho, dar! you —— ——! Don’ you hol’ yo’ haid s’ high ’s all dat! ’Cause you bin ’lected Bishop o’ dis heah Confer’nce, haint no reason why you s’u’d keep yo’ eyes gazin’ on de hebenly sky, all de time!”

Wondering to whom the old aunty was addressing her remarks, I let my gaze follow hers across the street, and there, swinging down the sidewalk, with all the dignity his office could inspire, came the Bishop who addressed the meeting I had just left. Indeed, he looked, as no doubt he felt himself to be—every inch a Bishop; and, togged out in bran-new ecclesiastical garb, he certainly cut some figure as he passed down the thoroughfare in which, in nearly every house, lived negroes. The Bishop was alone, and evidently in a hurry to catch a train at Union Station, for he walked rapidly, head up, eyes on the sky, and apparently oblivious of the gaping interest his presence was arousing among the residents crowding nearly every window and doorway to see him go by. I watched him far down the street until he disappeared. All that time the old negress kept her eyes on him, and her tongue wagging alternately encomiums and advice.

“Do you know the Bishop, Aunty?” I asked, as my car hove in sight.

“Shoah, I does, chile!” said she, kindly. “I nu’sed dat

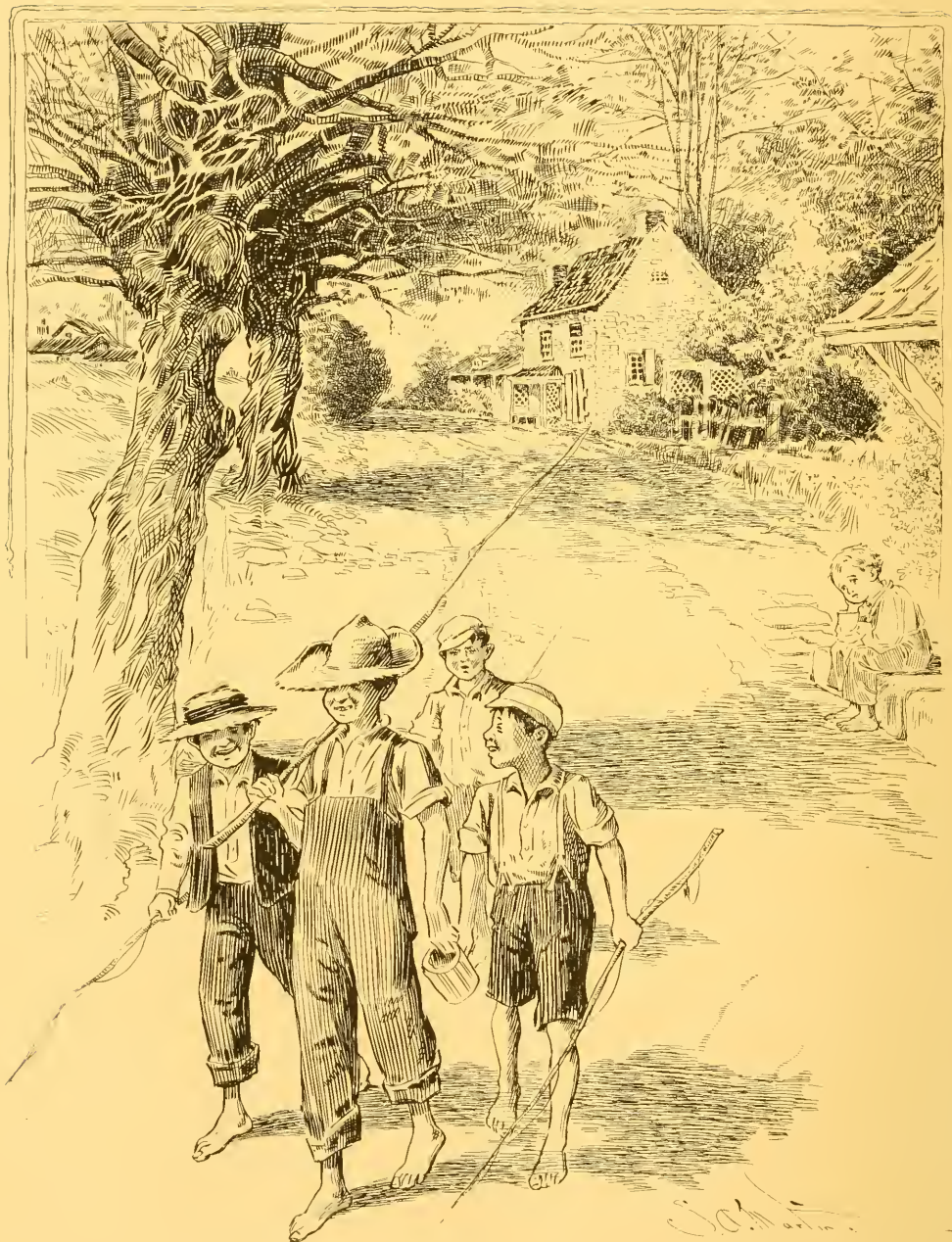
THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

man w'en he wuz 'nly a li'l', wee baby! He's a powe'ful sma't man; but I'se erfraid hes haid's bin tu'ned by bein' 'lected Bishop! "

Then I ran for my car; and, getting aboard, jotted down on some "copy" paper, a few lines of "Ho, Dar! You 'Rastus Johnsing!" I know the real name of the Bishop. It is not Johnsing; but that will do very well for my purpose.



LITTLE-BOY-LEN.



*"Little Boy Len, Disconsolate,
Wonders and Grumbles at His Fate."*

LITTLE-BOY-LEN.

Little-Boy-Len, disconsolate,
Wonders and grumbles at his fate—
Why must he all the long, long day
Stay at home by himself while they,
The older boys, down at the stream
Fish and swim where the waters gleam?

How well he knows their bounding joy
When like a shadow swift and coy
A finny form, to tug a line,
Shoots from some drooping rock or vine!
And oh, the rapture when a fish
Is landed with a circling “swish!”

The ripples' flow he seems to hear;
To catch the bird-songs sweet and clear,
And scent the mint that grows around
The old grist-mill whose whirr profound,
From early morn till dewy night,
Its beauty adds to things of sight.

Little-Boy-Len! His inmost soul
Revolts to think how those boys stole
Away and left him snug a-bed
When dawn the ruddy East o'erspread.
“'Cause I am 'nly six,” grieves he,
“They think I'd *drown'd*; but they'd jis' see

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

“ I’d *not!* ’N’ I c’n fish ’n’ swim
’S good ’s *them*; fer Uncle Jim
Teached me jis’ how t’ bait a hook,
’N’ swimmin’ ’s easy ’s t’ look!
I’ll jis’ ast mother. *Her*, I know,
’Ll not deny t’ let me go! ”

Little-Boy-Len! His mother kind
Tells him he must not fret nor mind—
“ You are too little, dear, to roam
About the creek, so far from home.
Be a good boy, and when you ’re ten
I’ll let you fish all you want, *then*.”

Little-Boy-Len! Hope he has still—
A neighbor lad has come from mill! . . .
“ Th’ boys a-ketchin’ anything? ”
“ Yes; . . . Silversides . . . each had a string—”
(Such conversation passed, I ken.)
Swiftly runs the Little-Boy-Len,

And cries aloud expectantly:
“ Oh, mother! mother! *do* let me
G’ down’t th’ crick! . . .” Then in a shout:
“ Boys jis’ *jerkin’* th’ *Silksides out!* ”
Since then the years have fled like dew,
But “ Silky ” sticks to that boy true.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.



DO you ever catch a Silverside? Perhaps you do not know the game little fish by that name. The encyclopedias refer to it as a genus of fishes of the family *Atherinidae*, related to the Mulletts which have a broad, silvery band along each flank. The genus comprises many species which abound both in America and in Europe. Those of the United States are called "Silversides" and "Smelts" and "Pesce Rey." They are good food-fish when not too small.

Well, three good-sized strings of those little fishes were responsible for the nicknaming of a six-year-old boy, and for my writing, incidentally, "Little-Boy-Len." I think I was about eighteen years old, and was jogging along home from mill, one bright, sunny morning in May, driving an old, gray mare we called Kit, which was lazily drawing a light spring-wagon comfortably filled with milling. Just as I passed the house of our nearest neighbors, the drowse into which I had fallen was broken by a sharp, squeaky, little voice.

"Hin! hoy, Hin!" it called.

"Whoa, Kit!" I said, turning in the direction of the voice, and the mare stopped instantly. There, like a cat to a wire-screen, hung Little-Boy-Len—that was not his real name, but near enough—on the high board-fence in front of his home, with bare head and feet, his mouth screwed up and one eye shut because of the sun's bright glare.

"Wuz you down 't th' crick?" he asked without further preliminaries.

"Yes; I am on the way back from Hunter's Mill, now. I——"

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

“ ‘D y’ see Bub, ‘n’ Al, ‘n’ ‘Liss (his brother Sherman and my brothers, Alpheus and Ulysses) down ‘ere? ” he broke in eagerly.

“ Yes——”

“ Wuz they *fishin’*? ”

“ Yes.”

“ *Wher’*? ” quick as a flash.

“ They were on the apron of the dam when I saw them,” I said, smiling at the boy’s eagerness and the avidity with which he devoured what information he was getting.

“ Wuz they *hetchin’* anything? ” he asked, and awaited my reply with bated breath.

“ Oh, yes; they each had quite a string of Silversides and——” I intended to tell him the boys had also caught a lot of Chubs and Sunfish; but he did not wait. Instead, with a little yelp of delight, he dropped to the ground, sheer as a plummet, tore open the yard gate weighted shut with worn-out plow-points hung on a chain, flew through the opening and around the house, his chubby bare feet patting a tattoo on the hard clay walk as he ran. The gate banged after him, and I, laughing at his sudden flight, drove on.

Half an hour later, having put away my milling and watered and fed the old mare, I was going into the house to dinner, when the boy’s father, who hugely enjoyed a good joke or story, came across his garden to the lane which ran between the two properties.

“ Say, Hen! ” he called. “ What’d you do t’ our Len? ”

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

"Why—nothing that I know of," I replied, wondering what was up.

"Y've set the boy *plumb crazy!*" the old man cried, a merry twinkle dancing in his eyes. "Y' tol' him, he says, th' boys 're ketchin' lots o' fish down't th' crick, 'n' 't's set him *clean daffy*. Our Sherman 'n' your two boys went fishin' 'arly this mornin', leavin' Len asleep 'n bed—run off 'n' left him, he thinks—'n' he's been fussin' 'roun' ever sence he got up, pesterin' his mother t' let him g' down 'n' fin' 'em. O' course, she wouldn't let him go, 'cause he's s' little! He knowed you wuz down t' mill, 'n' wuz watchin' all forenoon fer y' t' git back. So, when y' tol' him th' boys wuz ketchin' lots o' fish, he thought *sure* his mother'd let him g' down to 'em, 'n' he run *tearin'* int' the house wher' his mother 'n' Mis' Hirdman wuz quiltin', *belted* int' th' quiltin' frames, nearly up-settin' 'em, 'n' yelled like 'n Ingin: '*Moither, mother!—my God, mother!—le' me g' down't th' crick!* Bub, 'n' Al, 'n' 'Liss 's jis' a-*jerkin'* th' *Silk*sides out!"

Little-Boy-Len (that sobriquet, or pet-name, was shaped entirely by my own fancy), did not get to go fishing that day, but he got the nickname, "Silky," which sticks to him yet. The story was too good for either his or our family to keep, and soon had gone the rounds of the neighborhood. Some one started to call the little fellow "Silky," the boys took it up, and so it remains.

TALE OF A QUAINF FOLK-BALLAD.

TALE OF A QUAINF FOLK-BALLAD.



LONG in the early nineties there gathered nightly at the Pittsburgh Press Club a coterie of newspaper men of a type peculiarly its own. Five of that special group are dead—Stephen Hornett, George Welshones, Clarence Bixby, George Petitt and Leon Bancroft. They were as bright a set of news-handlers as Pittsburgh ever saw, or probably will see. All were high-strung, full of what is called artistic temperament, and each a splendid entertainer, according to his bent. Among the most brilliant was Stephen Hornett, familiarly known as “Steady,” because of his steady propensity to lose at cards (usually faro). He was sporting editor of the old *Pittsburgh Times*, and an acknowledged authority on prize-ring, racing and baseball matters. He had fads, of course, like all brilliant people, one of which was quaint, pretty bits of verse or song. This brings me to my tale.

“Steady” roomed in an Irish section of the city, and one night sang for a small group at the Club what he called “No More Am I a Blooming Maid,” an Irish folk-ballad he had learned from an old woman who lived near where he roomed. There were two or three members of the Club who played the piano well, and sly, old Steve privately practiced the singing of the ballad with one of them until they had everything down pat, accompaniment and all. I was one of the favored few who heard Hornett sing that ballad in the Press Club; and let me add, one of the favored few who ever heard him sing it at all. He only sang on rare occasions, and never

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

before a promiscuous crowd. Sensitive and shy as a school-girl, in such matters, his auditors had to be tuned just right before he would attempt to sing for them.

It was after "30," about one o'clock in the morning, just at the close of a hard, Fall rain. About half a dozen members had got through their work and come to the Club. Not having worked that day, I had been at the Club all evening, and was half asleep on a couch in the library, which was next the music-room, when Hornett's accompanist struck the opening bars of the introduction to the ballad. Sweet and crooning like, they thrilled me wonderfully. Wide awake, then, I got up from the couch and started to go into the music-room to better hear the playing. At the door I stopped. Hornett had begun to sing, his rich barytone voice in perfect harmony with the accompaniment. Music always sounds better on water or during damp weather; but the condition of the atmosphere was not responsible for the exquisite rendering of that peculiarly beautiful ballad. Stephen Hornett was the master spirit and artisan of it all. Here are the words he sang:

"No more am I a blooming maid,
Dreaming in the flow'ry shade;
My youth and bloom are all decayed.
Sk'deen, mavourneen, slon!

"Shule, shule, shule, agra!
Time can only ease my woe,
Since my true love from me did go.
Sk'deen, mavourneen, slon!

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

“ I will sell my rack, I will sell my reel,
When flax is spun I will sell my wheel
To buy my love a sword of steel.
Sk’deen, mavourneen, slon !

“ Shule, shule, etc.

“ I wish I was on Brandin’s Hill,
It is there I’d sit and cry my fill,
And ev’ry tear would turn a mill.
Sk’deen, mavourneen, slon !

“ Shule, shule, etc.

“ I will dye my petticoat—dye it red,
And around this world I will beg my bread,
Till all my friends will wish me dead.
Sk’deen, mavourneen, slon !

“ Shule, shule, etc.”

I stood in the doorway until the rendering of the ballad was ended, but did not join in the applause which followed. I could not, somehow. It seemed to me like sacrilege to applaud—in the vociferous manner those fellows did—a thing so exquisitely beautiful. Instead, I went up to the singer, and, taking him by the hand, said:

“ Stephen, that was wonderful—immense! Where did you run across it? And won’t you please sing it again? ”

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

The others joined me in urging for a second singing of the ballad, or at least part of it; but Hornett refused absolutely to sing another note that night, and started to go home. I caught him in the hallway.

“Steady,” I said, “will you let me have the words of that song?”

“I will not, Brownfield!” he told me, pointedly. “I would not let the Angel Gabriel have them!” And he stalked out as though greatly offended at my presumption.

But some days later he gave me a copy of the words, and several times sang me the tune in the inimitable way he could do it. Kindly assisted by Professor John Gernert, of Pittsburgh, in the arrangement of the harmony of the piano accompaniment, I recently tried to reproduce on paper the ballad as Hornett sang, and his accompanist played. My effort, with Hornett’s favorite stanza, appears on opposite page.

It is a mighty big undertaking for one so amateurish in music as I am to coax into cold notes and other music characters, any composition entirely from memory, and particularly is the task a difficult one, trying to keep the composition exactly in line with the manner others have sung and played it. But I wanted the composition badly; so, late one night I slipped down from my den to the piano, with a staff I had made myself, picked out the air of the ballad, and wrote it in what I thought was the key of E flat. As I did so, I seemed to hear old “Steady’s” voice singing and his accompanist playing as plainly as I did that night—or morning, rather—at the Press Club. I wrote the music in two-four

NO MORE AM I A BLOOMING MAID.

Moderate.

First system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Bass staff has accompaniment with notes G2, B1, D2, F2, G2, B1, D2. Dynamics: *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Slowly

Second system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Bass staff has accompaniment with notes G2, B1, D2, F2, G2, B1, D2. Dynamics: *f* (forte), *des* (descriptive), *p* (piano).

I will sell my rack, I will sell my reel. When flax is spun I will

Third system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Bass staff has accompaniment with notes G2, B1, D2, F2, G2, B1, D2. Dynamics: *rit* (ritardando), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ff* (fortissimo), *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte).

sell my wheel, To buy my love a sword of steel. Sk-deen, ma-

REFRAIN.

First part of the Refrain. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Bass staff has accompaniment with notes G2, B1, D2, F2, G2, B1, D2. Dynamics: *rit* (ritardando), *p* (piano), *ff* (fortissimo), *f* (forte), *des* (descriptive).

vour-neen, Slon' Shule, Shule, Shule a- gra. Time can only ease my woe

Second part of the Refrain. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Bass staff has accompaniment with notes G2, B1, D2, F2, G2, B1, D2. Dynamics: *rit* (ritardando), *ff* (fortissimo), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *pp* (pianissimo).

Since my true love from me did go. Sk-deen, ma-vour-neen. Slon.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

time, and took it to Professor Gernert for help. He said the music was in C minor, and liked it very much; but suggested that common time would be better, and that the key of G minor would be more suitable for the ordinary voice. He wrote the score out that way, and I took it home and copied it as here produced, the expression marks being almost entirely my idea.

“The composition is your own,” Professor Gernert said, as I left him. “I simply helped you to perfect the harmony.” And I felt very proud.

If the words, or the music of the ballad was ever published it must have been in a very obscure, private way, for I have searched in vain for either. But it really does not matter. I have my old friend, “Steady” Hornett’s version, and that is all-sufficient for me. He said “Sk’deen, mavourneen, slon!” is Irish for “My darling, my loved one; health to you!” and “Shule, shule, shule, agra!” means “Walk, walk, walk, my love!” Again, it does not matter. Some of the words may be the coinage of Hornett on hearing the old Irish woman sing the ballad. If such is true, they are more valuable to me than were they pure “Auld Sod” dialect.

ANOTHER QUAINF FOLK-BALLAD TALE.

ANOTHER QUAIN'T FOLK-BALLAD TALE.



UP IN Preston County, West Virginia, in the heart of Chestnut Ridge Mountains, there lived, more than forty years ago, a loony old character who earned a scant living by hunting, trapping and the cutting of hoop-poles. I never saw the man; but during my boyhood I heard many tales of his queer doings and sayings. Among the boys who attended the same country school I did was one Frank Blaney, a stout, good-natured, fun-loving, devil-may-care sort of fellow, who had spent months near the old mountaineer's home, where his father, Aaron Blaney, was getting out steam-boat timber. Frank was a good story-teller, could sing like a bird, and often entertained us boys with tales of the old hoop-pole cutter. He also taught us a quaint—for all of its silliness—ballad which he said the old fellow claimed he composed, both words and music. The old chap called the ballad "It Rained a Mist." The words ran:

"It rained a mist, it rained a mist,
It rained throughout the town;
And all the boys about the town
Went out to toss their balls, balls, balls;
Went out to toss their balls.

"Sometimes they tossed their balls too high,
And then again too low;
A little boy gave his ball a toss,
And in the Jew's garden it did go, go, go;
And in the Jew's garden it did go.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

“ The Jew’s daughter came out, all dressed in silk
And robes of richest charm :

‘ Come in, come, my poor little boy,
Come in and get your ball, ball, ball ;
Come in and get your ball ; ’

“ She took him by the lily-white hand,
And through the garden they went
Down in the cellar, beneath the castle,
Where no one could hear him lament, lament ;
Where no one could hear him lament.

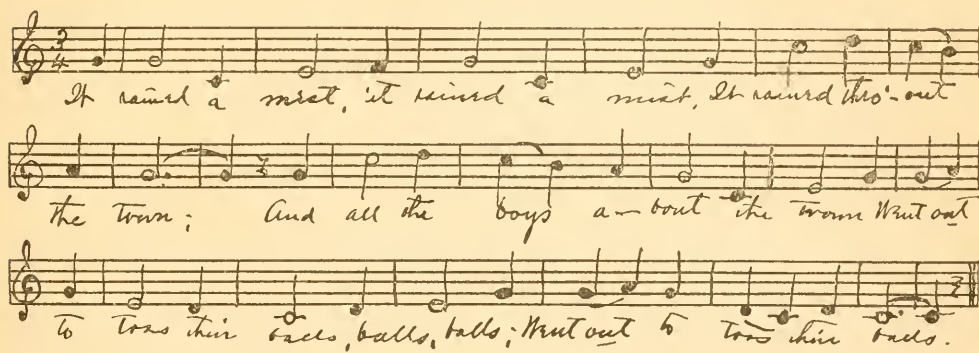
“ She pinned him to a napkin white—
Oh, wasn’t that a sin?—
And called for a basin as bright as gold
To take his heart’s blood in, in, in ;
To take his heart’s blood in.

“ ‘ Go place my Bible at my head,
My prayer-book at my feet ;
And if my school-mates inquire for me,
Just tell them that I’m asleep, ’sleep, ’sleep ;
Just tell them that I’m asleep.

“ ‘ Go place my prayer-book at my feet,
My Bible at my head ;
And if my parents inquire for me,
Just tell them I am dead, dead, dead ;
Just tell them I am dead.’ ”

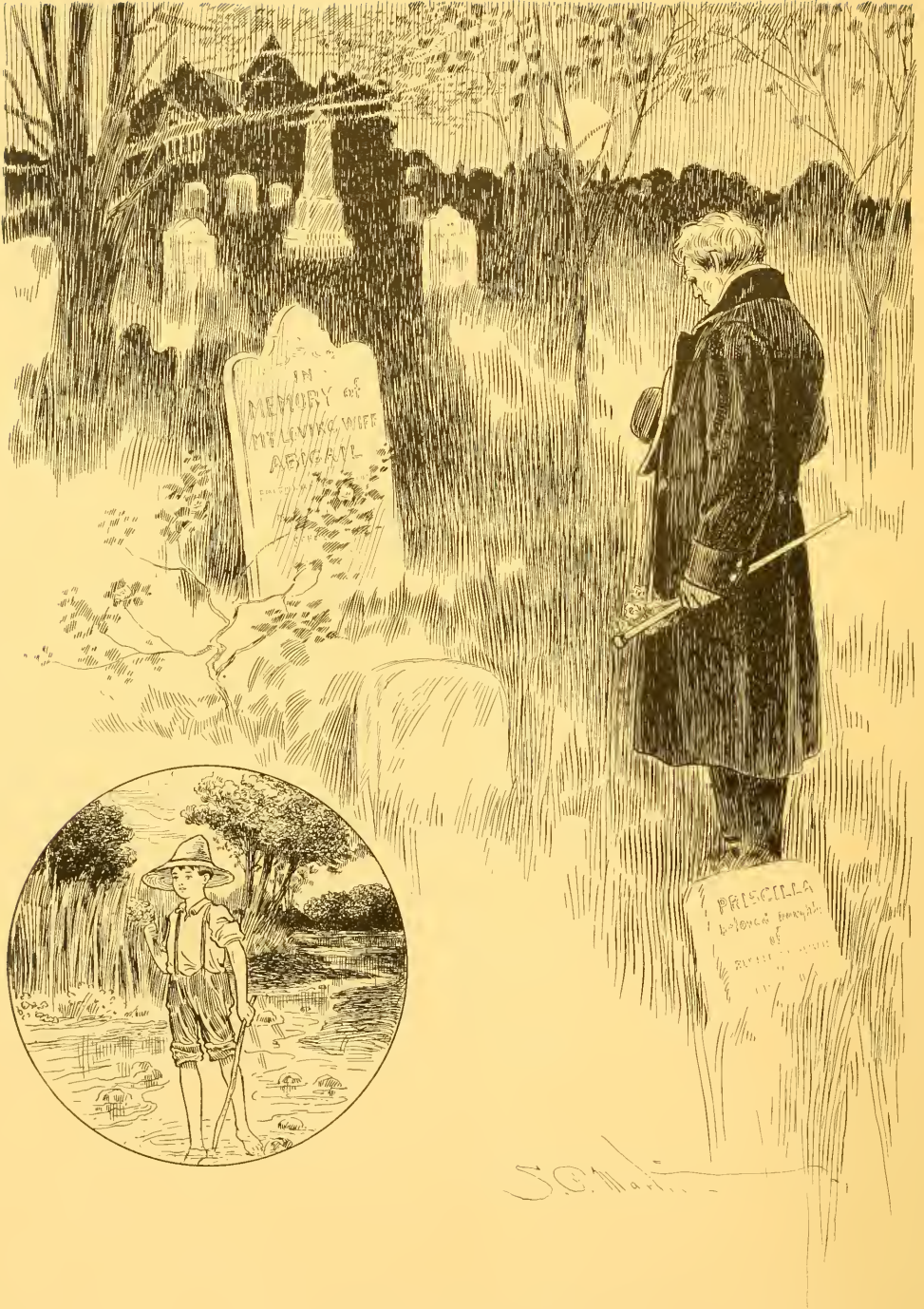
THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

I can see Frank as he sang that ballad for us boys, huddled around him on the school grounds, and hear his clear voice plaintively droning out the melody in imitation of the old mountaineer, something like this:



How impressionable childhood is! And how those impressions stick throughout life! The verse of the ballad is practically doggerel; but we boys thought it fine, because, perhaps, of the taking of the boy's heart's blood in a basin as bright as gold, by a Jew's daughter, down in a cellar beneath a castle. The tune, itself, however, I still think quaint and pretty. I give it here for that reason, as well as to round out this little tale.

A DREAM OF YOUTH.



*"Lonely I Sigh for The Days That Are Fled—
Days of The Loved Ones so Long Ago Dead."*

A DREAM OF YOUTH.

Tall grew the grass where the buttercups blow ;
Sweet were the lilies whose fragrance, I know,
Nature distils but to gladden the souls
Of the young whom coyly thus she enrolls
Among her lovers, all ardent and true
As crystals ashine in drops of the dew.
Fresh blew the breeze through the tall, waving grain
Made bright by the kiss of soft Summer rain—

Rain which the Earth gladly drank till the flow'rs
Lifted their heads in the woodlands fair bow'rs,
Happy, it seemed, in their innocence wild,
Simply in giving their lives to a child.
Clear flowed the brook as it murmured along—
None save a youth knows the joy of its song!—
Whirling and dancing as onward it flowed
Others to join in its pilgrimage road.

Blest in the freedom of boyhood, atune,
Glad sang my heart with the fullness of June.
And when the sun had gone down in the West,
Gorgeous in crimson and gold, to his rest,
Long would I roam over meadow and hill,
Night-beauties thronging my soul to its fill.
Softly the sough of the wind far away
Fell on my ear like sea-billows at play.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Far gleamed the stars in their great trackless flight ;
Calm shone the moon with her silvery light. . . .
Quickly, yes, quickly, the years crowding come,
Mingled with sorrow and Life's busy hum.
Lonely I sigh for the days that are fled—
Days of the loved ones so long ago dead.
Sadly I weep for them, vainly I cry ;
Like a last leaf I must wither and die.



IT SEEMS hardly possible that a mere boy would write a poem of this nature. One would look for thoughts of the future from a youthful courter of the Muses, instead of backward musings. I think I was about fifteen when I wrote "A Dream of Youth." What actually inspired the effort, I have forgotten; but it must have been because, along then, I was beginning to appreciate William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis," and like productions. At any rate, I was full to overflowing with just such feelings and sentiments, and thus got rid of some of them.

I sent the poem to William H. Miller, then Editor of the *American Standard*, a weekly newspaper, published at Uniontown, Pa. Since then I have had miles of articles published—some in magazines of note—but largely in daily and weekly newspapers; but all the thrills I have subsequently experienced, if put into one, would be mild, it seems to me, compared with what I felt on seeing and reading in print that one composition.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

It was at school, I remember, that I first saw and read in print the poem. One of the boys—he has been dead some years, poor fellow!—showed it to me in the *Standard*. It was during afternoon recess, and I shall never forget the expression on his face as he pointed out the verse to me. Whether it was envy or praise, I never quite knew, and never tried to learn. The fact that my poem had been published was all-sufficient, so far as I was concerned. Envy nor praise at that juncture had any effect whatever on me. I must have read that poem a thousand times. Then I got several more rapturous thrills on seeing the poem copied in other journals. Honestly, I think I would not have traded places then with Longfellow or Bryant. Gee! can't a boy appreciate things? I would give ten years of my life to be able to feel as I felt then. No; I take that back. A boy's pain is just as keen as his pleasure.

This poem, of course, is crude and amateurish; but it isn't so bad for a boy. I found it in a scrap-book not long ago, and give it here rather as a curiosity.

AT THE BALL.

AT THE BALL.

Supper over, a half hour free,
Gentlemen take the liberty
Among themselves to congregate,
Discuss important news of late,
The clubs, the town, the freshest joke,
To sip their wines, to chaff, to smoke,
Explode their lordly views, and trace
The future of the populace.

Ladies their toilets rearrange,
A little gossiping exchange,
And little jealousies confess
In spleenish comments on the dress
Of the fair rival who has won
Some laurels of a race begun.
A little storm of frowns and riles;
The music opens—all is smiles.



THIS little skit was written in December, 1888. I was doing some work for the *Pittsburgh Press*, then called "The Penny Press," I believe, and was assigned to write up a swell ball, in the East End. Not having a suit of evening clothes of my own, and not caring to go to the expense of hiring one for that occasion, I covered the assignment dressed in the same suit I wore while doing regular work. It was good goods, almost new and fit well, so I did not worry about my clothes. I had done considerable newspaper work previous to this, but had never before attempted to write up a high-toned social

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

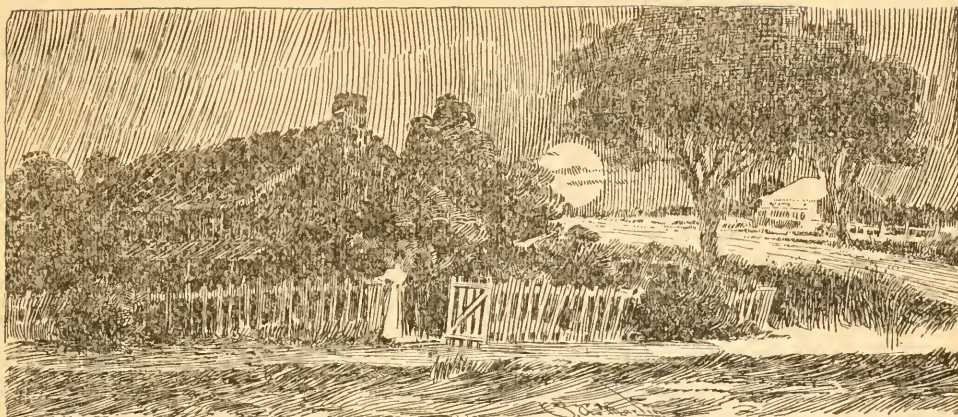
affair. The ball, as such functions were then called, was given by the wife of a rich Pittsburgh banker in honor of her niece, who was from Philadelphia on a visit.

I was somewhat worried at the outset as to just how to proceed so as to both get my data and not make any blunders. Finally I wrote a neat note to the hostess, explaining that I was a reporter, would only detain her a few minutes, and asking for the data necessary to give her affair a good send-off. This I gave to the door-man who, when I told him my business, took me into a cozy little room while he carried my message to his mistress.

Supper was not over when I got there, and I had to wait at least an hour before the hostess got opportunity to see me. But the time passed very pleasantly, what with watching the guests, listening to rather interesting conversations, having to do so or else close my eyes and ears, and enjoying some fine cigars and two or three glasses of excellent champagne, which the door-man insisted I should partake of. At length the hostess came to me, graciously excused herself for having detained me so long, gave me a list of her most important guests, described the gowns worn by a lot of the women, doing all she could to help me.

Well, I gave the ball a bang-up send off in *The Press* next day; but I could not get rid of what I had seen and heard there so easily. The remembrance of such kept pestering my brain until I wrote the little satire, "At the Ball," a week or two later. It was published in *The Press* at the time; but it is doubtful if anyone besides myself ever suspected why I came to write it.

BILLY BARTON'S WOOING.



“ At de Ol’ F’ont Gate, in de Ebentide.”

BILLY BARTON’S WOOING.

At de ol’ f’ont gate, in de ebentide,
W’en de face o’ de moon wuz hid
By sof’, fleecy clouds, flyin’ high an’ wide,
An’ de chant o’ de katydid
Mak my fon’ heahrt yeah’n ter enfol’ my love,
An’ fo’ jes one kiss I prayed,
Wid eyes es bright es de stahs erbove,
She glance at me an’ said:

“ Tak yo’ ahm erway, Mistah Bahton!
Yo’ know we’s not ingaged!
An’ if Ma’ma sees you, sahtin
An’ suah, she’ll be intraged!
No, you mus’n’t kiss me, honey!—
Not fo’ bahles an’ bahles o’ money!
Don’ tease me so!
Hit’s wrong, you know!
Mistah Bahton, tak yo’ ahm erway!”

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Den de pale moon speed f'um behin' de cloud,
An' de rays o' silber fell
O'e' de face o' my love, so faih an' proud,
An' er tale tēr me dey tell,
Dat mak me bol', an' my ahm moah strong
Eroun' her fo'm ter stray—
In her heahrt I see wuz Love's ol', sweet song;
But still ter me she say:

“Tak yo' ahm erway, Mistah Bahton!

Yo' know we's not ingaged!

An' if Ma'ma sees you, sahtin

An' suah, she'll be intraged!

No, you mus'n't kiss me, honey!—

Not fo' bahles an' bahles o' money!

Don' tease me so!

Hit's wrong, you know!

Mistah Bahton, tak yo' ahm erway!”

Since de Muddah Ebe in de Gahden dwelt

Wid Adam, so long ergo,

Her daughtehs, everyone, hev felt

In dooty boun' ter show

Dat dey mus' flihrt fo' er li'l' while—

Wid de heahrts o' men mus' play—

So, my love look up at me wid er smile,

An' I yeah'r her sof'ly say:

“Tak yo' ahm erway, Mistah Bahton!

Yo' know we's not ingaged!

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

An' if Ma'ma sees you, sahtin
An' suah, she'll be intraged!
No, you mus'n't kiss me, honey!—
Not fo' bahles an' bahles o' money!
Well—one li'l' one—(m-m!)
But jes in fun—(m-m!)—
Billy Bahton!—O, you rascal man!”



“BILLY BARTON'S WOOING ” has had an interesting, but rather disastrous history. It was intended, originally, as the words of a song I composed some years ago. I, and a lot of my friends who heard it sung and played, believed the song a winner; but several hard-hearted publishers thought otherwise. So Billy's story of his love-making has not received the plaudits of the song-loving public its author enthusiastically hoped it would. But the only adverse criticism of it has been that it is too “classy”—whatever that is—and, as there is a pretty little human-interest episode connected with its composition, I include it in this collection.

Because some reader might wish to know how the music of the song runs, it is here appended (see pages 90-91).

It was a soft, moon-lit evening, toward the last of August. Except for a few white, fleecy clouds, soaring Eastwardly and very high above the earth, the sky was clear, the air balmy and fragrant with tree and flower odors from old Allegheny City Central park. There was a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Western Theological Seminary to settle some

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Take Ye' Ahm, Ahwag, Mistah Bakton.

Moderato

at de ol' f'ont gate in de

é-bru Tide when de face o' de moon was hid by ref' glee-ry clouds, sail' in high an' wide. An' de

chant o' de Ka-ty—did mak my f'ore heart jump to em brace my love. An' for jes one Miss I

prayed. Hid eyes as bright as de stars in town, she look at me an' said: Take ye'

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Chorus:

ah-wah ah-wah, Mistah Bah-ton, you know we's not in - jaged; An' if

Ma-ma see you, Sehtin An' seeah she'll be in - jaged! No, you

mus - nt kiss me, how - ay - not fo' baki's an' baki's o' ma - zy! Don'
(after 3rd verse), Heh,

See me so! It's wrong you know. Mistah Bah-ton, take yo' chan a - way!
om bl' om (ma) But des in juu (m.m') Biliy Bah-ton - eh, you vessel mah!

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

important controversy confronting the affairs of the Seminary; and I was assigned to report the result. The chapel is located in Ridge Avenue, facing the park; and the meeting's being a star-chamber affair—"no reporters admitted," being among the orders issued to the janitor who met me at the door—I took a walk in the park to smoke and pass the hour I had to wait.

After a while I sat down on a park bench, near a rustic house, located on a slight rise of the ground; and, presently, from the entrance to the rustic house, I heard a "real South'n" female voice say:

"Tak yo' ahm erway, Mistah ——! You know we's not ingaged! An' if my Mama'd see you——!"

"Nevah min' yo' Mamma, honey—*she's not heah!*" the male voice coaxed.

Well, they scrapped away in darkey love-making style, until finally the girl gave a little smothered squawk, and I knew Billy had won out, all right. I heard her call him "Billy." His last name sounded like Bahton; but I was not sure. At any rate, the incident struck me as both humorous and romantic, and I let my imagination run riot, somewhat, in the writing of the poem.

WISDOM COUPLETS.

WISDOM COUPLETS.

Who cheats me once, let Shame's curse on him be ;
If twice he cheat me, let it fall on me.

A fool considers money only pelf ;
The wise man smiles and gathers it himself.

For vinegar, in pickles, there's a place ;
But it should never linger in a face.

A sheep is social, and a goat as well ;
Yet, mix the two, and there's—a tale to tell.

Clear well your vision ere you judgment pass :
Your bias may be smudge upon your glass.

Money in hands which always use it just,
Is never reckoned merely drossy dust.

Hearts that seem lightest often carry woe :
Like mighty ships the fires lie far below.

Hail to the man who fights Life's battles brave !
Nor worry much for him beyond the grave.

You cannot eat your cake and keep it, too ;
Yet there are those who strive such feats to do.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Honor meets Honor on a common plane ;
While Error sulks or seeks her own domain.

Love will not live on kisses, nor a heart
Wax warm and tender 'neath a galling smart.

Meet Luck half way along Life's shifting road :
Fate scorns the coward, but respects a goad.

Were men all angels, women, in despair,
Would seek of devils soon their lots to share.

It matters not what hue the world he paints,
A man expects his wife among the saints.



THE foregoing "Wisdom Couplets," as I have captioned them, have been culled from a lot of such effusions I have written from time to time. Some of them are quoted from memory, while others were scribbled on scraps of paper and envelopes recently found laid away in an old trunk. Each was prompted by some incident that struck me as worth noting; but what those incidents were, I have completely forgotten, except the one which inspired the writing of the first couplet given here. A certain man cheated me out of a lot of money—a lot for me to lose at the time, at least—and I said to myself: "It is his fault that he cheated me this time; it will be my fault if he cheat me again."

FAREWELL—NOT AU REVOIR!

FAREWELL—NOT AU REVOIR!

“ Farewell—not *au revoir*!” he said,
 And looked into her eyes.
She smiled and calmly bent her head—
 His words gave no surprise.
“ Good bye—I wish you well!” said she,
 And blandly tripped away;
But oh, the world of misery
 Her bosom had to pay!

For lovers true the twain had been,
 Betrothed and constant long,
Till slyly crept their Eden in
 A thief who stole its song,
And in its stead left Pride and Doubt,
 A most efficient pair
To sorely blight and put to rout
 The plans of Cupid fair.

Weeks into months and months to years!—
 So Time has glided by,
Bringing content to him, while tears
 Her grief must mollify.
He is a husband, proud and kind;
 But she, a maiden lone,
Scorns solace such as his to find—
 Such travesty to own.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Thus oft is played the Game of Hearts—

One faithful to the end ;

The other mourns a day, then starts

A new love-bow to bend.

One bears a cross ; the other rides

The paths of Pleasure gay.

Why Fate so widely lots divides,

No mortal can assay.



METAMORPHOSES.



"They Marked How Swiftly Lifted She Her Head . . ."

METAMORPHOSES.

As the white moon the silent East o'erspread
With brighter brightness as she calmly rose,
They marked how swiftly lifted she her head
Above the dark, grim mountains, on whose brows
A thousand weird, fantastic monsters raised,
Like frowning giants all their battle-blades—
A Xerxes army in array—and gazed
Upon the peaceful tenants of the glades.

But as she climbed the arching vault so still—
Strange metamorphosis!—the monsters changed
To kindly genii, who smiled good will
O'er all things on the earth beneath them ranged.
And they, whose hearts had cruel quarrel torn,
From that rapt scene a blessed precept learned :
His jealous ire, and her reproachful scorn
Into a flame of perfect love were turned.



THESE lines are a fragment from a long poem I wrote in my callow days—nearly thirty years ago. The manuscript of that prolonged, though earnest effort, was destroyed some fifteen years ago, when our old homestead, in Southern Fayette County, Pa., burned. I remember the lines, however, and the circumstance which incited their composition. I have always had a penchant for what the literary fellows call “local color,” and one glorious summer evening I went out to court inspiration

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

from the rising moon. Perched on the top rail of a worm-fence, my back against one of the stakes, I sat for nearly two hours watching the moon rise over Chestnut Ridge Mountains. Such a sight still fills me with rapt enthusiasm; but at that time it was like nectar from the gods to my ardent, impressionable soul. Imagine yourself, indulgent reader, on a night like that, in the country, miles from a railroad or village larger than a mere hamlet, the air as pure and fragrant as heaven can distil, the sky perfectly clear, the stars snow-white, myriads of insects singing in exact harmony around you, an occasional night-bird trilling a melody sweet as a seraph's song—imagine yourself enfolded, as it were, as I was that night, with those stupendous creations of Nature, sitting on a high hill, watching the moon rise over a range of tall mountains!

And such a moonrise! My view of it was unobstructed by bush or tree or object of any kind. First a faint whiteness tinged the Eastern horizon, low down to the crest of the mountains which showed pitch black in their darkness. Then delicate streaks of silver began shooting upward, and gradually the brightness along the mountain-tops grew brighter and brighter until the whole Eastern sky was aglow. Suddenly the moon seemed to shoot her great, white disc completely from behind the black mass of mountains, then rise so rapidly that I imagined I could see her moving. During that period and for probably half an hour or longer, every tree and bush and crag on the brow of the mountains, though clear and distinct in outline, showed so dark and grim that I pictured them to be an army of old Xerxes' fierce warriors, come to life, and march-

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

ing over the mountains to invade and ravage our peaceful, unprotected country. But, as the moon climbed higher and higher up the still vault of the sky, the outlines of the objects on the mountains became softer and softer until they appeared like good friends, smiling down upon us.

As I sat there my enrapture was broken by the voices of a rustic pair of lovers strolling by. They had evidently just made up a lovers' quarrel, for the male voice was declaring eternal abstinence from jealousy, and the female voice cooing its mistress' perfect bliss in the reconciliation.

Forcibly impressed with the simile—the change of the imagined monsters to kindly genii and the making up of the lovers—I went home and let my muse create the metamorphoses portrayed in the lines given at the head of this article.

THE CANDIDATE.

THE CANDIDATE.

Who is it comes with smiles so bland
And grasps me tightly by the hand,
As though I were the Noble Grand?

The candidate.

Who is it comes my work to block,
And praises high my barn and stock,
My house, my yard, my garden-walk?

The candidate.

Who tells my wife, right to her face,
She's "beautiful and full of grace,"
Until she scarcely knows her place?

The candidate.

Who says our children "are the beat,"
And kisses baby, shy and sweet,
Until they all are at his feet?

The candidate.

Who claims that I'm the only man
In my whole section whom he can
Intrust to carry out his plan?

The candidate.

Who'll cross the street his "friend" to see,
Though mud and mire be to the knee,
But, when elected, don't know me?

The candidate.

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

Who, when defeated, home he goes,
And sadly sheds his Sunday clothes,
And swears: "I'll quite the biz, by Mose!"?
The candidate.



CANDIDATES—the same, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow—have always been interesting to me whatever the party they have been affiliated with. Up in "Old Immortal Springhill,"—so named years ago by an old uncle of mine, John D. Scott, who said "the chickens crowed Democracy" there—candidates, in the Spring of 1884, were as thick as flies in harvest. Not only were there three or four candidates for State Legislature and almost every county office, but each township office had several aspirants. I was home from a six-months' term of school-teaching in West Virginia, and took considerable interest in the campaign. I came in close contact with most of the candidates, and thus had opportunity to note their characteristic peculiarities, which I found to be pretty similar each to the others.

About that time William H. Cooke, for several terms Superintendent of the public schools of Fayette County, took editorial charge of the Uniontown, Pa., *Genius of Liberty*, a rock-ribbed exponent of Democracy, and he asked me to correspond for it. "Write on any subject you care to," he told me; and one day I wrote "The Candidate," which Mr. Cooke published in his paper, and sent me a letter, praising the contribution highly, and thanking me for it. The poem was copied quite extensively at the time.

HERE'S TO OLD PITTSBURGH!

HERE'S TO OLD PITTSBURGH!

From North, from South, from East, from West,
Ay! from the whole world round!
We come at Father Pitt's behest,
Each filled with joy profound,
To celebrate befittingly
His honored Natal Day.
Then here's to you, and here's to me!—
Hip! hip! hooray! hooray!

Here's to old Pittsburgh! Glad are we to be
Where forges ring
And toilers sing
In tuneful harmony!
Here's to old Pittsburgh, the workshop of the world!
Where skill and brawn
Count for the man,
And Worth's flag is unfurled!

Our city's fame is spread afar,
We fear no rivals bold;
Yet unto none is there a bar
Who trade with us would hold.
In education and the arts
We proudly lead the way;
We rule supreme in all the marts—
Hip! hip! hooray! hooray!

THE LORELEI AND OTHER POEMS.

On fairer maids the sun ne'er shone ;
Nor wives, nor mothers true,
Nor sweethearts we so fondly own,
Than bless both me and you.
They cheer our hearts like founts of wine
Along Life's toilsome way.
Then, here's to yours, and here's to mine!—
Hip! hip! hooray! hooray!



THESE are the words I wrote for the march-song, "Here's To Old Pittsburgh!" which was published during the Sesqui-Centennial celebration (1908) of the birth of Pittsburgh (November 25, 1758). Prof. Albert D. Liefield composed the music, and it was at his request the words were written. The song was favorably received, and made quite a hit, locally. The song is emblematic of the spirit of the occasion which prompted its production.

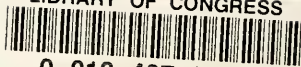
THE END.

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